

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 05695 01 OF 04 031636Z
ACTION NEA-07

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 4 JIDDA 5695

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, SA, YE, UR, US
SUBJ: DOD ASSISTANT SECRETARY MURRAY'S CONVERSATION WITH
PRINCE SULTAN

SUMMARY: ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT MURRAY
CONFERRRED WITH SAUDI MINISTER OF DEFENSE PRINCE SULTAN FOR ALMOST
TWO HOURS ON AUGUST 1. SULTAN EXPRESSED SAG DESIRE FOR COOPERATIVE
EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN YAR DEFENSES. MURRAY REPORTED ON HIS
TALKS WITH PRESIDENT SALIH ON PREVIOUS DAY. SULTAN EXPRESSED PLEASURE
AT YAR DESIRE FOR U.S. PRESENCE, CALLING IT RESULT OF LONG EFFORT
HE HAD CARRIED ON FROM TIME OF HAMDI. SULTAN DESCRIBED SAG COMMITMENT
TO YAR IN CASE OF ATTACK AND ASKED WHAT U.S.G. POSITION WOULD BE.
MURRAY SAID THIS WOULD REQUIRE ACT OF CONGRESS, BUT THAT VISIBLE
U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM NOW WOULD SERVE AS DETERRENT TO
ATTACK ON YAR. END SUMMARY.

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT MURRAY PAID COURTESY
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SECRET

PAGE 02 JIDDA 05695 01 OF 04 031636Z

CALL ON SAUDI DEFENSE MINISTER PRINCE SULTAN IN TAIF ON AUGUST 1.
MEETING WAS ALSO ATTENDED BY AMBASSADOR WEST, CHUSMTM GENERAL
CATHEY, EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR, LT COL T.O. WILLIAMS (OSD/
ISA), AND LT COL KENNETH MCKIM (JCS, J-5). IT WAS CLEAR FROM
BEGINNING OF TALKS THAT PRINCE SULTAN HAD MORE ON HIS MIND THAN MERE
COURTESY CALL, AND MEETING LASTED ALMOST TWO HOURS.

2. AFTER INITIAL PLEASANTRIES, PRINCE SULTAN NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA BY AN AMERICAN SECRETARY OF DEFENSE. HE SAID HE HAD EXTENDED INVITATION TO SECRETARY BROWN MANY TIMES AND THAT SAUDI ARABIA WAS STILL LOOKING FOR HIS VISIT. MR MURRAY SAID BOTH SECRETARY BROWN AND DEPUTY SECRETARY DUNCAN WOULD LIKE TO VISIT SAUDI ARABIA. IT IS ONLY QUESTION OF FINDING TIME. PRINCE SULTAN REPLIED THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT SECRETARY BROWN COME AND SEE THE DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS IN SAUDI ARABIA. MR MURRAY SAID THAT HE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT SECRETARY BROWN COME.

3. SULTAN THEN MOVED TO THE SUBJECT OF YAR AND EXPRESSED HIS AND SAG'S APPRECIATION FOR USG MOVEMENT TO MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN COUNTERING SOVIET INFLUENCE. YAR DEFENSIVE CAPABILITIES MUST BE STRENGTHENED.

4. MR MURRAY SAID THAT HE AGREED AND THAT SECRETARY BROWN AGREED. HE HAD JUST COME FROM THE WHITE HOUSE WHERE SAUDI VIEWS WERE CONSIDERED IN A MEETING THERE. HE COULD TELL PRINCE SULTAN THAT USG AGREES WITH THRUST OF SAG VIEWS AND SECRETARY BROWN HAD SENT HIM TO TELL PRINCE SULTAN THAT AND TO WORK WITH AMBASSADOR WEST, GENERAL CATEY, AND OTHERS TO ACHIEVE OUR COMMON GOAL. MR MURRAY WENT ON TO SAY THAT US SEES PROGRAM TO STRENGTHEN YAR DEFENSE CAPABILITIES AS JOINT VENTURE. US SEES SAUDI ARABIA AS PRINCIPAL POWER IN ARA- BIAN PENINSULA AND OUR AID TO YAR IS IN THAT CONTEXT. WE ACCEPT THE NOTION THAT U.S. MUST PLAY A LARGER ROLE IN YAR AND THAT WE HAVE TO PROVIDE MORE EQUIPMENT AND HAVE TO ACCELERATE THE TRAINING PRO-
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SECRET

PAGE 03 JIDDA 05695 01 OF 04 031636Z

GRAM. HOWEVER, WE WANT TO DO THAT IN COOPERATION WITH SAUDI ARABIA. WE UNDERSTAND THAT WITH THE EXPANSION OF SAUDI ECONOMY AND SAUDI ARMED FORCES, MANPOWER IN KINGDOM IS STRETCHED VERY THIN, BUT WE STILL HOPE FOR BOTH POLITICAL AND MILITARY REASONS THAT SAUDI ARABIA CAN PROVIDE PEOPLE TO WORK WITH US IN THE TRAINING PROGRAM. WE RECOGNIZE THAT IT MAY BE IN THE INTEREST OF BOTH SAUDI ARABIA AND THE U.S. TO HAVE OTHER COUNTRIES, SUCH AS JORDAN OR PAKISTAN, TO HELP US, BUT WE PREFER THAT THE WORLD SEE U.S. AND SAUDI ARABIA AS PARTNERS IN YAR PROGRAM. GENERAL CATEY AND GENERAL HUMAID ARE WORKING OUT SPECIAL PROGRAMS TO ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS. IF PRINCE SULTAN AGREES WITH THESE PROPOSALS, THEN WE HOPE WE CAN HAVE MORE SUCH MEETINGS TO CONSULT ON YAR AND TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON THE NEEDS OF YAR WHETHER FROM U.S. OR FROM FRANCE. MR MURRAY ADDED THAT IN SUGGESTING THIS EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, HE WAS NOT SUGGESTING THAT WE TALK TO OTHERS. IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR US TO HAVE A CLEAR IDEA OF THE SITUATION AND A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF SAG VIEWS OF YAR REQUIREMENTS IN ALL PROGRAMS SO THAT WE CAN SEE WHERE U.S. EFFORTS FIT INTO OVERALL PROGRAM.

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 05695 02 OF 04 031648Z

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USMTM/DCR RIYADH IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 4 JIDDA 5695

LIMDIS

5. ASSISTANT SECRETARY MURRAY CONTINUED BY SAYING THAT HE HAD MET THE NIGHT BEFORE WITH PRESIDENT ALI ABDALLA SALIH IN YAR. SALIH HAD BEEN VERY DIRECT IN SAYING THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO EVICT SOVIET ADVISORS. HOWEVER, HE NEEDS ASSURANCE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM THE U.S. AND IN AMOUNTS AND TYPES EQUAL TO WHAT THE SOVIETS ARE SUPPLYING TO SOUTH YEMEN. SALIH WAS ALSO DIRECT IN SAYING THAT HE WANTED A DIRECT U.S. INVOLVEMENT, A SECURITY AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S., AND A MUCH MORE VISIBLE U.S. PRESENCE. SALIH EMPHASIZED THAT HE WANTED MORE ACTION AND LESS WORDS. MR MURRAY SAID THAT HE TOLD SALIH THAT HE HAD BEEN SENT BY USG TO HELP, THAT HE WAS GOING TO SEE PRINCE SULTAN TODAY, AND THAT HE THOUGHT THINGS WOULD BEGIN TO HAPPEN SOON. SALIH REPLIED THAT HE WOULD BELIEVE IT WHEN HE SAW IT IN WRITING. MR MURRAY THEN SAID THAT HE HAD COME BACK TO SHARE THIS WITH PRINCE SULTAN AND TO GET THE PRINCE'S VIEWS, ESPECIALLY HIS ESTIMATE OF THE IMPACT THIS WOULD HAVE ON THE USSR.

6. PRINCE SULTAN SAID THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO PLACE SAUDI POLICY OF COOPERATION IN YAR IN PERSPECTIVE. WHEN THE REVOLUTION BROKE

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PAGE 02 JIDDA 05695 02 OF 04 031648Z

OUT AND THE EGYPTIANS GOT INVOLVED, SAG AIM WAS TO BRING ABOUT STABILITY AND TO STRENGTHEN THOSE OPPOSING THE LEFTISTS. SAG KEPT U.S. INFORMED STEP BY STEP. PRINCE SULTAN SAID HE DID NOT WANT

TO MAKE DISCUSSION A LONG ONE. THE PROBLEM HAS GONE ON FOR 16 YEARS, AND SO HE WOULD JUMP TO TIME OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY. KENNEDY WAS MISINFORMED BY HIS ADVISORS, WHO TOLD HIM THAT IT WAS IN BEST INTEREST OF U.S. TO GET RID OF THE SAUDIS AND TO LET NASSER RULE THE WHOLE AREA. SULTAN SAID HE REMEMBERED MANY LONG MEETINGS BETWEEN KING FAYSAL AND AMBASSADOR BUNKER AND BETWEEN KING AND U.S. AMBASSADOR IN SAUDI ARABIA IN WHICH SAG ATTEMPTED TO CONVINCE U.S. THAT EGYPTIAN INTERFERENCE IN YAR WAS AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF U.S. AND THE WEST AND THAT THIS INTERVENTION WOULD RESULT IN INTRODUCTION OF COMMUNISM, WHICH ALWAYS FINDS A PLACE IN POOR AREAS. PRINCE SULTAN SAID THAT HE ALSO REMEMBERED A VISIT HE MADE TO U.S. TO TELL PRESIDENT NIXON THAT U.S. SHOULD RESUME RELATIONS WITH YAR. NIXON SAID IT WAS YAR THAT SEVERED RELATIONS AND THAT YARG WOULD HAVE TO MAKE FIRST MOVE. THIS MADE IT EASIER FOR NASSER TO CONVINCE YEMENIS THAT U.S. WAS AGAINST YAR.

7. SULTAN THEN SAID THAT HE WAS PLEASED TO HEAR FROM MR MURRAY THAT YAR WANTED A U.S. PRESENCE BECAUSE THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT YAR WANTS AMERICAN PRESENCE. THIS IS GOOD SIGN. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE HAD WORKED HARD FOR THIS. HE HAD TRIED TO CONVINCE PRESIDENT HAMDI OF THE UTILITY OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH U.S. AND THAT HE SHOULD GET U.S. MILITARY EQUIPMENT. PERHAPS AMBASSADOR WEST HAS BEEN MADE AWARE BY U.S. AMBASSADOR TO YAR THAT HAMDI UP THROUGH HIS LAST DAYS WAS STILL TELLING THE U.S. THAT SAUDI ARABIA DID NOT WANT GOOD YAR-U.S. RELATIONS. PRINCE SULTAN SAID HE SENT WORD TO THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN YAR TO BEWARE OF HAMDI'S MISREPRESENTATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT. THE PRINCE SAID THAT DURING HIS VISIT TO YAR, HAMDI TOLD HIM THAT HE WANTED TO ABROGATE THE TREATY WITH THE USSR, BUT HE TOLD HIS OWN COLLEAGUES THAT HE WAS NOT GOING TO ABROGATE THE TREATY. SULTAN SAID WHOLE MANEUVER WAS TO GET MORE AID FROM SAUDI

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SECRET

PAGE 03 JIDDA 05695 02 OF 04 031648Z

ARABIA. ONE MONTH LATER, HAMDI SENT ABD AL-ALIM TO THE USSR TO SIGN NEW AGREEMENTS FOR MORE RUSSIAN EQUIPMENT. SULTAN SAID HAMDI THOUGHT THAT SAUDI ARABIA WOULD NOT KNOW ABOUT IT, BUT HE GOT A COPY OF THE AGREEMENT. HE WROTE A LETTER TO HAMDI, SAYING THAT HE HAD HEARD ABOUT THE VISIT OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE TO USSR AND THAT HE WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE TREATY, BUT HAMDI REPLIED THAT YAR HAD RECEIVED THE INVITATION A LONG TIME AGO AND THAT THERE WAS NO NEED FOR CONCERN. SULTAN SAID HE THEN SENT A MESSAGE TO HAMDI ASKING THAT THE LATTER SEND AN EMISSARY TO GET SOME INFORMATION HE WANTED TO EXCHANGE. HAMDI HIMSELF CAME DURING THE HAJJ AND THE YAR-USSR AGREEMENT WAS PLACED IN FRONT OF HIM.

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 05695 03 OF 04 031700Z

ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 INR-05 INRE-00
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USMTM/DCR RIYADH IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 3 OF 4 JIDDA 5695

LIMDIS

8. PRINCE SULTAN THEN TURNED HIS REMARKS TO PRESIDENT GHASHMI. THREE WEEKS AFTER GHASHMI BECAME PRESIDENT, HE CAME TO SAUDI ARABIA FOR A SECRET MEETING WITH KING AND PRINCE SULTAN. SAUDIS MET WITH HIM FOR 6 HOURS. GHASHMI WANTED TO MAKE AN IMMEDIATE ANNOUNCEMENT EXPELLING THE RUSSIANS. SULTAN SAID THAT HE TOLD GHASHMI TO GO SLOWLY. HE SHOULD FIRST CLEAN UP AROUND HIM AND GET RID OF THE COMMUNISTS IN THE GOVERNMENT. HE SHOULD EASE UP ON RESTRICTIONS IN THE COUNTRY. AFTER A YEAR, HE COULD MAKE HIS MOVE AND HE COULD INTRODUCE AMERICAN PRESENCE. GHASHMI TOOK SAUDI ADVICE. HE DISMISSED UNDESIRABLE PEOPLE, CIVILIANIZED THE GOVERNMENT, AND WITH THE GOOD OFFICES OF SAUDI ARABIA, IMPROVED HIS RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. SOUTH YEMEN FOUND THAT CONDITIONS IN NORTH YEMEN WERE NOT IN THEIR FAVOR AND THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO MOVE IN. THEY ARRANGED GHASHMI'S ASSASSINATION.

9. TURNING THEN TO THE PERIOD AFTER GHASHMI'S ASSASSINATION, PRINCE SULTAN SAID THAT LUCKILY YAR TOOK SAUDI ADVICE AND APPOINTED A PROVISIONAL COUNCIL OF TWO MILITARY AND TWO CIVILIANS. IDEA OF

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SECRET

PAGE 02 JIDDA 05695 03 OF 04 031700Z

TRANSITION WAS TO GIVE TIME TO SEE WHO WAS THE REAL LEADER. PRESIDENT GHASHMI HAD TWICE RECOMMENDED SALIH. HE WAS ONE OF THE PROVISIONAL COUNCIL AND WAS STRONG AND LOYAL. PRINCE SULTAN SAID HE INVITED HIM TO SAUDI ARABIA AND THEY HAD TALKS LASTING FIVE HOURS. HE COULD SEE THAT SALIH WAS AN ACTIVIST AND WANTED TO DO THINGS QUICKLY. IN FACT, SALIH WAS SO ENTHUSIASTIC THAT HE WANTED TO

KICK THE RUSSIANS OUT IMMEDIATELY AND TO DECLARE WAR ON SOUTH YEMEN. SULTAN SAID THAT HE TOLD HIM TO GO SLOWLY, BUILD HIS STRENGTH, AND ESTABLISH A GOOD GOVERNMENT. MR MURRAY INTERJECTED THAT PRINCE SULTAN SHOULD TALK TO PRESIDENT SALIH ONCE A MONTH. SULTAN LAUGHED AND SAID THAT SALIH HAD GONE BACK TO YAR A MUCH WISER MAN. SALIH WAS AFRAID THAT THE U.S. WOULD NOT RESPOND AND WOULD NOT HELP HIM. SULTAN SAID HE TOLD HIM TO BE PATIENT AND TO GIVE U.S. TIME TO SEE ITS INTERESTS.

10. PRINCE SULTAN SUMMED UP BY SAYING THAT, NOW THAT YAR WANTS U.S. PRESENCE, HE WAS ASKING MR MURRAY AND AMBASSADOR WEST TO CONVEY TO SECRETARY BROWN AND SECRETARY VANCE THAT SAUDI ARABIA ENCOURAGES ANY KIND OF U.S. ASSISTANCE. PURPOSE OF MUTUAL COOPERATION SHOULD NOT BE FOR PROPAGANDA, NOT FOR A DECLARATION OF WAR, BUT TO STRENGTHEN THE YAR IN ORDER TO BRING PEACE AND STABILITY TO YAR. HE SAID HE WAS AWARE OF THE JOINT U.S.-SAG MEETINGS IN RIYADH. GENERAL HUMAID SAID YESTERDAY THAT MEETINGS WERE GOING VERY WELL. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THERE WOULD BE A MEETING NEXT SUNDAY AT 9:30 P.M. FOR HIM AND AMBASSADOR WEST TO REVIEW THE RESULTS OF THE MEETING. MAYBE SOMETHING FROM THE SAUDI SIDE WILL BE ADDED TO THE FINDINGS. HE RECEIVED A LETTER TWO DAYS AGO FROM PRESIDENT SALIH ASKING THAT HE SEND GENERAL KABBANI TO SANA FOR CONSULTATION. HE WROTE BACK THAT SAG WAS CURRENTLY STUDYING PROBLEM WITH THEIR MUTUAL U.S. FRIENDS AND THAT HE WOULD SEND GENERAL KABBANI NEXT WEEK TO REPORT ON WHAT HAS BEEN AGREED.

11. SULTAN THEN SAID HE HAD ANOTHER IMPORTANT QUESTION TO POSE.

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PAGE 03 JIDDA 05695 03 OF 04 031700Z

PRESIDENT SALIH HAD PASSED HIM A VERBAL MESSAGE ASKING WHAT SAUDI AND U.S. REACTION WOULD BE IF YAR WERE ATTACKED BY SOUTH YEMEN. YAR HAS INFORMATION THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE BRINGING 6,000 ETHIOPIANS INTO SOUTH YEMEN, AND SALIH IS AFRAID THAT HE WILL BE ATTACKED. SULTAN SAID HE HAD REPLIED TO SALIH THAT IF YAR IS ATTACKED BY ANYONE, SAUDI ARABIA WOULD HELP IMMEDIATELY. HOWEVER, HE WARNED SALIH THAT HE SHOULD NOT ATTACK SOUTH YEMEN. SULTAN NOW WANTED TO KNOW U.S. POSITION.

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 05695 04 OF 04 031728Z
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INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 INR-05 INRE-00
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S E C R E T SECTION 4 OF 4 JIDDA 5695

LIMDIS

12. MR MURRAY SAID THAT U.S. HAD FEW COMMITMENTS. TO MAKE SUCH A COMMITMENT, WE WOULD HAVE TO HAVE AN ACT OF CONGRESS. PRESIDENT SALIH HAD ASKED THIS SAME QUESTION. HE HAD TOLD SALIH THAT U.S. WOULD GIVE HIM MILITARY ASSISTANCE NOW AND THIS WOULD BE VISIBLE. USSR WILL UNDERSTAND THAT WE VALUE OUR RELATIONS IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA. OUR EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN THAT USSR HAS REFRAINED FROM ATTACKING IN CASES WHERE WE HAVE SHOWN SUCH INTEREST.

13. SULTAN SAID THAT IN CASE OF SAUDI ARABIA HE HAD HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO GIVE SALIH ANSWER THAT HE HAD GIVEN HIM. HOWEVER, HE HAD EMPHASIZED TO SALIH THAT HE MUST BE CAREFUL AND THAT ABOVE ALL HE SHOULD NOT ATTACK SOUTH YEMEN. IF SOMETHING HAPPENS, HE SHOULD COME AND CONSULT WITH SAG. SULTAN SAID HE FELT HE HAD TO CAUTION SALIH THIS WAY SINCE HE IS JUST LEARNING THE WAYS OF STATECRAFT. FURTHER, SAG IS STILL BUILDING ITS OWN FORCES AND DID NOT WANT TO BE FORCED TO TEST THEM.

14. MR MURRAY COMPLIMENTED PRINCE SULTAN ON THE WISDOM HE HAD
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 JIDDA 05695 04 OF 04 031728Z

SHOWN IN CAUTIONING SALIH. HE SAID THAT SAUDI ARABIA WAS IN POSITION TO PLAY THIS ROLE SINCE IT WAS THE PRINCIPAL POWER ON THE ARABIAN PENINSULA. HE HOPED THAT, WITH SAUDI AND U.S. HELP, PRESIDENT SALIH WOULD NOT PROVE TO BE THE IMPRUDENT MAN THAT PRESIDENT HAMDI HAD BEEN.

15. PRINCE SULTAN EXPRESSED ONCE AGAIN HIS APPRECIATION FOR U.S. COOPERATION. MR MURRAY REPLIED THAT U.S. WAS JUST COMING OUT OF DIFFICULT DECADE BEGINNING WITH THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY AND ENDING WITH THE RESIGNATION OF PRESIDENT NIXON. IT IS THOUGHT BY SOME OF OUR FRIENDS THAT WE LACK THE WILL TO ACT. WE ARE JUST NOW BEGINNING TO TAKE

STEPS. WE WANT THE PROGRAM IN YAR TO BE SUCCESSFUL AND WE ARE HAPPY THAT SAUDI ARABIA IS COOPERATING WITH US. WE ARE NOT AFRAID OF THE RUSSIANS. IN THE LONG RUN, WHAT U.S. AND SAUDI ARABIA HAVE TO OFFER THE WORLD IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE TO OFFER, AND WE THINK THE WORLD WILL COME TO RECOGNIZE THIS.

16. SULTAN ENDED MEETING BY EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE THAT U.S. WOULD FULFILL ITS OBLIGATIONS. IN PARTING, HE NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN PROBLEMS FROM TIME TO TIME IN OUR BILATERAL MILITARY RELATIONS AND THAT HE WAS PREPARING A LETTER TO SECRETARY BROWN EXPLAINING WHAT THESE PROBLEMS WERE. HE WAS CERTAIN THAT THESE PROBLEMS WOULD BE IRONED OUT IN VIEW OF THE STRONG DESIRE OF BOTH OUR COUNTRIES TO COOPERATE. SUCH MINOR PROBLEMS FROM TIME TO TIME WERE HEALTHY SIGN OF GOOD FRIENDSHIP, SINCE EACH SIDE FELT FREE AND COMFORTABLE ENOUGH WITH THE OTHER TO MAKE ITS VIEWS AND WISHES KNOWN. MR MURRAY SAID WE WOULD DO OUR BEST TO RESOLVE ALL PROBLEMS WHEREVER AND WHENEVER THEY ARISE.

17. THIS MESSAGE HAS NOT BEEN CLEARED WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY MURRAY.

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PAGE 03 JIDDA 05695 04 OF 04 031728Z

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